

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BONN 12992 031705Z

71

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01

TRSE-00 BIB-01 EB-07 OMB-01 (ISO) W

----- 125642

R 031653Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0872

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY MADRID

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PGOV FR GW PFOR XG IT

SUBJECT: FRANCO-GERMAN SOCIALIST CONVERSATIONS

REGARDING ITALY

REFS: (A) BONN 12389 NOTAL: (B) BONN 12873

1. DURING LAST WEEK'S MEETING IN BONN, THE FRENCH SOCIALIST DELEGATION ALSO DISCUSSED ITALIAN AFFAIRS WITH THE GERMAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (SPD).

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PAGE 02 BONN 12992 031705Z

2. ACCORDING TO AN SPD OFFICIAL, THE FRENCH SOCIALISTS

CRITICIZED FRG CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT FOR HAVING STATED THAT THE WEST WOULD REFUSE AID TO AN ITALIAN GOVERNMENT THAT INCLUDED THE COMMUNISTS. THE FRENCH SOCIALISTS SAID THAT SCHMIDT'S STATEMENT APPEARED TO SANCTION A NOTION OF ECONOMIC BOYCOTT THAT COULD BE USED AGAINST A POPULAR FRONT GOVERNMENT IN FRANCE. IT COULD ALSO GIVE GISCARD AN ARGUMENT TO USE IN ORDER TO DISCOURAGE THE FRENCH FROM VOTING FOR THE LEFT.

3. ACCORDING TO THE SPD OFFICIAL, THE FRENCH SOCIALISTS DO NOT NOW WANT THE PCI IN THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT, DESPITE THE FRENCH OPPOSITION TO SCHMIDT'S STATEMENT. THE FRENCH ARE AFRAID THAT THE PCI WOULD GET THE CREDIT FOR ANY ACHIEVEMENTS OF ANY GOVERNMENT IN WHICH THEY PARTICIPATE, BUT THAT THE ENTIRE LEFT WOULD GET THE BLAME FOR ANY GOVERNMENT FAILURES. BOTH THESE DEVELOPMENTS WOULD REDOUND AGAINST THE FRENCH SOCIALISTS. WHAT MITTERAND NOW PREFERRED, ACCORDING TO WHAT HIS ENVOYS TOLD THE SPD, WAS A GRAND COALITION OR SOME KIND OF "EMERGENCY" GOVERNMENT IN ITALY. MITTERAND HOPED TO FORM A POPULAR FRONT GOVERNMENT IN FRANCE BEFORE THE PCI CAME TO POWER IN ITALY. THEN THE SOCIALISTS RATHER THAN THE COMMUNISTS WOULD BENEFIT FROM THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT.

4. THE SPD OFFICIAL SAID THAT THE SPD, IN ITS CONVERSATIONS WITH THE FRENCH, EXPRESSED ITS CONCERN ABOUT THE PARTICIPATION OF THE PCI IN AN ITALIAN GOVERNMENT. THE SPD OFFICIAL SAID THAT THIS, HOWEVER, WAS NOT EASY TO DO BECAUSE THE SENIOR LEVELS OF THE SPD REMAIN DIVIDED ON THIS SUBJECT. EVEN THOUGH SCHMIDT IS AGAINST PCI PARTICIPATION IN AN ITALIAN GOVERNMENT, OTHER SPD LEADERS ARE NOT PREPARED TO TAKE SUCH A HARD LINE. MOREOVER, THOUGH ALL SENIOR SPD FIGURES RECOGNIZE THAT SCHMIDT'S STATEMENT MAY BE POPULAR IN ANTI-COMMUNIST GERMANY DURING AN ELECTION YEAR, THEY FEAR THAT THE ADVERSE INTERNATIONAL REACTION HAS GIVEN GERMANY A BLACK EYE THAT IS NOT TO THE FRG'S ADVANTAGE OVER THE LONG RUN.

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PAGE 03 BONN 12992 031705Z

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COALITION GOVERNMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS, COMMUNISTS, POLITICAL SITUATION, SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, PARTY MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 AUG 1976
Decapton Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: BoyleJA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BONN12992
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760299-0876
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760894/aaaadegr.tel
Line Count: 107
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 BONN 12389, 76 BONN 12873
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: BoyleJA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <31 MAR 2004 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <03 AUG 2004 by BoyleJA>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FRANCO-GERMAN SOCIALIST CONVERSATIONS REGARDING ITALY
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, PFOR, FR, GE, XG, IT
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006